

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

Today's people's lives are closely related to literary works such as poetry, films, and novels. This is because people see images of events that may have been experienced by themselves or people close to them. This happens because literary works are a form of mimesis of human life, especially the issues and conflicts that exist and are experienced by society.

Literary works have various forms, characteristics, and conditions. Literature has many types, including poetry and short stories, and the novel is currently attracting much attention. A novel is a written literary work that tells an incident from life that gives rise to a conflict that results in a change in the fate or life path of the perpetrator. According to Gibran (2019), a novel is a literary work that contains intrinsic elements such as subject, plot, setting, perspective, and characterization. As previously explained, novels as literary works also reflect the life or civilization of society. Therefore, when writing a literary work, the author already understands the environment, circumstances, and problems he wants to describe. The author describes the problem as a reflection of wider society. One of the novels that raise the problems around them is the novel "The Color Purple."

One of the novels related to this field is "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker. This novel with three hundred and eight pages is written in letters that tell the story of

Celie's uneducated and depressed life. Celie wrote the letter to God and then to her sister Nettie. This novel describes the struggles of Celie, an African-American woman, against the backdrop of the Jim Crow era (Gamble & Shaw 1997), in the United States. Celie, in the story, experiences racial segregation and patriarchal oppression. Even though she experienced so many struggles, Celie also showed her struggle to stop the oppression she experienced. With its extraordinary story, "The Color Purple" has several achievements such as winning the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Award for Fiction in 1983.

Alice Walker was born on February 9, 1944, in the small town of Eatonton, Georgia. Her parents are Willie Lee Walker and Minnie Tallulah Grant Walker. Of her eight siblings, five boys and three girls, she was the youngest. Walker was unintentionally shot by her brother with a BB gun when she was eight years old, leaving her blind in one eye. After the tragic event, Alice Walker became a withdrawn, melancholy, and lonesome young woman. Walker attended Spelman College in Atlanta after graduating from high school on a full scholarship in 1961 before transferring to Sarah Lawrence College in the vicinity of New York City in 1963. Due in part to the influence of activist and Spelman College lecturer Howard Zinn, Walker developed an interest in the American civil rights movement after graduation in 1965. Walker has published poems, short stories, novels, essays, and anthologies during the course of her creative career. Walker won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1983 for her book *The Color Purple*, making history as the first African American woman to do so. She also received an honorary degree from the California Institute of the Arts in 1995, the

Domestic Human Rights Award from Global Exchange in 2007, among other awards, for her work on *The Color Purple*, which won the 1983 National Book Award for Fiction.

The scientific society for women first appeared and was founded in Middelburg, a city in the south of the Netherlands in 1785. After the 19th century, feminism developed into a movement that received a lot of attention from white European women. The struggle of these women is based on what they call universal sisterhood. Charles Fourier, a socialist utopian campaigner, first used the term "feminist" in 1837. Subsequently, this movement moved to America and grew rapidly since John Stuart Mill published *The Subjection of Women* (1869), which this movement marked the presence of wave feminism.

Gender disparities with their separate duties undoubtedly result from the existence of sex differences. As a result, gender roles are unavoidable in society today. In a sense, women have outward reproductive organs, are able to become pregnant, give birth, and nurse (sex), after which they have an innate responsibility to take care of, raise, and educate their offspring (gender). However, the framework of unfairness brought about by gender norms and gender differences is a problem that requires legal action from women. Gender roles cannot be isolated from the connection between the wife and husband in the family, which consists of two roles: (1) Public Role and (2) Domestic Role, in the context of women as wives. The three main streams of the feminist movement focus on women struggles in the public sphere. On the other hand, there is a feminist movement development that sees women's position and experiences

in most situations differently from men. The feminist movement was initiated by Simone de Beauvoir in her thoughts on existential feminism. One of the descriptions of existential feminism theory is the marginalization of women as others in the culture created by men and assuming men as subjects, while women are objects. This existential feminism is a struggle of women through individual movements in the domestic sphere and tends to be different from other feminist schools that carry out struggles in the public sphere.

The public role is usually defined as the area for self-actualization of men (husbands), and the domestic role is considered the place of women or even the world of women. The cultural barrier is the cultural heritage of primitive society that separates the duties of men as hunters and women as gatherers. Additionally, it is these cultures that have been successfully transmitted to the agrarian population, where men place themselves outside the home (Public Sphere), either to manage agriculture or conduct business, and then women are placed in the home (Domestic Sphere), where they perform all of the tasks that are obviously known to us. The role barrier that our society has actually created restricts women's options and increases the responsibility on males. Men often shun highly educated women out of concern that they would dominate.

The struggle of women to demand their rights as whole human beings is a resistance to the division of labor that establishes men as the ruling party in the public sphere. Therefore, feminism emerged as a social movement which initially departed from the assumption that basically women were oppressed and exploited, through which women (feminism) also tried to end the oppression and exploitation (Fakih,

1999). Feminism highlights sexuality and domestic politics both at the personal and public levels. The women's movement slowly grew into a big political force, spread throughout Europe and North America, and then gave birth to a radical feminist movement that fought for its aspirations through campaigning and democracy to build women's space and culture. Furthermore, socialist feminists place more emphasis on building alliances with other oppressed groups and classes, namely with anti-imperialist movements, labor organizations, and leftist political parties. While liberal feminists are more of a small group that concentrates on lobbying the government for pro-women reforms and trying to influence policy makers (Rueda et al, 2007).

Several writers have produced works that examined the conditions of women in patriarchal societies. Women are frequently shown in literary works as interacting with men in civilizations that are obviously ruled by men.

Patriarchy, the organized framework of patriarchal dominance, promotes men from all ethnicities and socioeconomic groups to establish their manhood through physical force and intimidation against other people, especially women and children. However, Alice Walker depicted the situation of black women in American culture in "The Color Purple". She emphasized that women had no rights and were oppressed and mistreated by men. "A girl can only become something to her spouse; she is nothing to herself" (Walker 1982, p. 162).

In conclusion, this study aims to determine how women struggle to be independent against the construction of domesticity in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker using feminist theories and approaches.

“All my life I had to fight. I had to fight my daddy. Then, I had to fight my brothers. I had to fight my cousins and my uncles. A girl child ain't safe in a family of men. But, I never thought I'd had to fight in my own house. She let out her breath. I love Harpo, she say. God knows I do. Be that as it may, I'll kill him dead before I let him beat me (Walker, 1982, p. 44)

Walker emphasizes throughout the novel that the ability to express thoughts and feelings is essential for developing self-personality. At first, Celie couldn't stand the people who harassed her at all. However, slowly Celie began to perfect her story by telling Shug. However, it wasn't until Celie and Shug discovered Nettie's letters that Celie finally had enough knowledge about herself to form a strong self-identity. She also found a way to get out of her suffering.

The novel “The Color Purple” describes the situation of African-American women who have no rights and are treated badly by men. Celie, the novel’s main character, emphasizes her self-interest in expressing her thoughts and feelings and developing her identity as a complete human being. This research aims to analyze how the main character, Celie, who is an African-American woman, survives and faces the violent discrimination that she experiences in modern American society. Apart from that, the reason for this research is also to show Celie's struggle to overcome the inequality and violence that she experiences. To analyze this further, this research use Beauvoir’s theory of “women’s struggle”, which analyzes women’s struggle against violence and discrimination, which is the centre of feminist theory.

More research needs to be done using the novel “The Color Purple”, especially those that focus on discussing women's struggles from the main character in the novel.

Previous research that used “The Color Purple” as the data analyzed was (Panjaitan et al. 2013) research shows the inequality female characters feel and Celie's struggle to fight discrimination. This research uses qualitative research methods. Meanwhile, the theory used is feminism to discuss gender inequality and Marx's struggles theory to become the basis for analyzing Celie's resistance to discrimination. Similarities from the research of (Panjaitan et al. 2013) both analyze the character Celie in “The Color Purple”. Meanwhile, the difference is that the research of (Panjaitan et al. 2013) uses Marx's theory of feminism and struggle.

Previous research analyzing women's struggle was also found in several studies. An example is (Karimah's 2017) research that previously researched women's struggles using different data, Golden Web Novel. In this research, the researcher used the same research methods and theories: qualitative methods and feminist theory. This research shows that the main character in this novel is aware that he is being discriminated against and shows resistance to patriarchy. Therefore, this research further analyze the women's fight against violence in the novel “The Color Purple”. The similarity of (Karimah's 2017) research is that it uses the same theory, Beauvoir feminism. Meanwhile, the difference is the use of different data.

The researcher feels that this issue is interesting to analyze more deeply because the desire to understand how women faced and survive the violence and discrimination that exists and is depicted in the novel “The Color Purple” using Beauvoir's theory and Galtung's theory, “Women Struggle”. Based on the background above, the researcher entitled the analysis: "WOMAN STRUGGLES AGAINST THE VIOLENCE IN

MODERN AMERICA PORTRAYED IN ALICE WALKER'S "THE COLOR PURPLE": FEMINIST APPROACH".

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Women are always the second choice of this society. And man always patriarchal against women. Based on the background, the problem in this research is:

1. The cultural violence faced by the main character in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker's
2. The domesticities faced by the main character in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker's
3. The economy violence faced by the main character of patriarchy within society in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker's
4. The forms violence faced by the main character of patriarchy within society in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker's
5. The struggles of women against the violences in the novel "The Color Purple" by Alice Walker's

6. The violences faced by the main character in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s
7. The struggles of women against the patriarchy in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s

1.3 Limitation of The Problem

There are several issues of the problem listed in the problem. To focus on the analysis. This limitation consists on two topics:

1. The violences faced by the main character in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s.
2. The struggles of women against patriarchy in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s.

1.4 Formulation of the Problem

After the problem that the researcher analyze, the researcher formulated the problem as mentioned into:

1. What are the forms of violences faced by the main characters in the Novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s?
2. What are the struggles of women against the patriarchy in the Novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker’s?

1.5 Objective of the Research

After the problem that the researcher analyze, the researcher formulated the objective of the problem as mentioned into:

1. To identify and analyze various forms of violence faced by the main characters in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker's.
2. To investigate the main characters struggle against the patriarchy in the novel “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker's.

1.6 Significance of the Research

This research has two significant points, namely, it provides theoretical and practical contributions to readers. Theoretically, this research can be a reference for further research on women's struggles or feminist approaches. Apart from that, this research can also increase knowledge for literature students, especially English literature, who are interested in literary works in the form of novels. Moreover, the final theoretical significance is that it can be used to understand the work “The Color Purple” by Alice Walker's work better, especially the issues of feminism contained in it.

Apart from that, this research also has two practical significance. The first practical significance is that it can be used as a comparison material with existing research to provide better research for the future. The second is to provide new ideas or views that are comprehensive and innovative for further research to advance knowledge in critical analysis of literature, especially novels.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding about the literary terms used in this research, the researcher would like to briefly provide explanation of terms as follows:

Feminism : Feminism is a scope of socio-political developments and belief systems that expect to characterize and lay out the political, financial, individual, and social equality of the genders. People often mistake the meaning of feminism as bringing down men, when it's actually about equality for both men and women without discrediting the other genders (Giroud, 1961).

Patriarchy : Patriarchy is a system where men are placed as rulers who dominate various roles in the social, political, and property systems. This system implicitly gives privileges to men and places women below men so that men become the sole, central rulers and everything (Sultana, 2010). There are two main forms of patriarchy: private and public. She believes that women have overcome private patriarchy to a great extent but public patriarchy continues to operate (Politics, 2011).

Domesticity : This word refers to conditions related to life at home, such as household duties, relationships with family, and all activities carried out at home (Cohen, 1998). In feminist discourse, this word refers to controlling and confining the desire or power to do what is a woman's right (Romero, 1997). The domestic confinement feminists protest should guarantee the

democratic rights they want. This is precisely the logical maneuver by which opponents of women's suffrage were able to argue that women's disenfranchisement by appealing to the entitling function of domesticity. (Becker et al., 2015)

Second sex : The word second sex refers to the social role and status given to women where men are dominant. Beauvoir (2012) explains that this term emphasizes that women are not only considered "second" or "other" in the context of gender but are also considered entities that do not have the same rights and freedoms as men.